



Hospital Kit Checklist & Emergency Plan for Parkinson's Disease

Preparedness is your first line of defense in reducing potential problems and avoiding emergencies. Parkinson's disease (PD) is a complex condition. Many hospitals, physicians, nurses, and emergency personnel may not fully understand your condition. Taking your PD medications on time is critical to your ability to move, talk, or swallow. A trip to the hospital or an emergency may cause a change in your usual medication schedule. Use this information to help you plan ahead.

WHAT IS A HOSPITAL KIT? The Hospital Kit is a set of items prepared in advance in case of an emergency room visit or hospitalization. People with Parkinson's should have a kit ready to take with them on short notice. Whether the situation is a planned surgical procedure, or an unplanned emergency, the tools in the kit will help you receive the best care possible.



National Parkinson Foundation (NPF) developed a hospital kit called the "Aware in Care" Kit. Call 800-4PD.INFO (473-4636) or go online at www.awareincare.org to request one.



Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Center (PADRECC) created materials for use in a hospital kit. Go to the website www.parkinsons.va.gov for more information, or inquire at your local PADRECC. Items on the list below marked with the PADRECC logo were developed by PADRECC.

LIST OF SUGGESTED ITEMS IN A HOSPITAL KIT:

■ **Aware in Care Hospital Action Plan**

- A 23 page step by step booklet developed by NPF.
- Use this guide to prepare for both planned hospital visits & emergencies.

■ **Parkinson's Medications & Master Medication List**

- Maintain a current list of all of your medications (over-the-counter, prescriptions, supplements). Include doses, the time schedule, and any allergies.
- Fill out the medication form included in the "Aware in Care" kit
- Use electronic tools such as MyHealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov or My Med Schedule at www.mymedschedule.com to create and print a list.
- Carry the list with you at all times and bring it with you to the hospital.
- Bring all your pills in the original containers. Be sure to have your family take your pills home if you are hospitalized.

■ **Emergency Contact List & Advanced Directives**

- Keep a current list of emergency contact information. List your family members, health care proxy, caregiver names, and phone numbers. A health care proxy is a person who can make medical decisions for you if you are unable.
- List your primary care doctor, neurologist or PD doctor, and other specialists – their names and phone numbers.
- Bring a copy of your Advanced Directives and Living Will. If you do not have these items and are interested in forming one, talk to your VA doctor, nurse or social worker who can help you form one.
- Carry vital documents with you at all times and have backups elsewhere.

Prepared by Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Center (PADRECC).
For more information, go to www.parkinsons.va.gov

■ **Medical Alert bracelets, pendants, and information cards**

- Ask your VA doctor to order a medical alert bracelet or pendant from the VA prosthetics department. It can be personalized to meet your needs. For example: "Parkinson's disease, DBS brain implant, No MRIs..."
- Wear your bracelet or pendant at all times.
- Carry a wallet card that says "I have Parkinson's Disease".
- These items help convey important health information in emergency situations.
- Also available at pharmacies, drug stores, or online websites.



Parkinson Disease Quick Fact Sheet for Providers

- Provides important clinical tips about PD for the nursing staff taking care of you while hospitalized, such as medications that may be contraindicated.
- Side 2 of the form should be filled out by you to provide specific information about how PD affects you, plus the name and phone number of your PD doctor.
- Share this PADRECC developed Fact Sheet about PD with hospital staff.



Reminder cards

- Reminds hospital staff that you need your medication on time, every time, and provides other facts about PD.
- Give the PADRECC developed reminder card to each nurse that cares for you, or post it on your hospital room communication board.



PADRECC Yellow Tote Bag

- Use the yellow PADRECC tote bag to store items that belong in your Hospital Kit.
- Keep the bag in a convenient location to grab in case of an emergency room visit or hospital admission (planned or unplanned).
- Teach your family about the Hospital Kit tote bag so they can help you.

MORE SUGGESTIONS:

1. Maintain a notebook for other important information such as: previous surgeries or planned elective surgeries, health insurance cards if any in case you go to a non-VA facility, current immunization information including flu and other vaccines along with the date if done outside of the VA, other medical problems such as high blood pressure, cancer, any medical devices that you have or use: DBS, pacemaker, prosthesis, etc.
2. Notify your PD doctor if you are hospitalized and/or tell the hospital staff to contact your PD doctor. If you know ahead of time that you are scheduled for admission, tell your PD doctor in advance. If you were admitted to a non-VA hospital, bring your discharge summary to your PD doctor at your next appointment.
3. Have a family member be your advocate and serve as a liaison between you and your health care providers. This may help you navigate the system, and help you in your decision-making.
4. Carry your cell phone for convenience and to facilitate good communication with your family and other important persons.
5. Wash your hands frequently to reduce chance of infections and drink plenty of liquids to keep hydrated while hospitalized.